



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **FORMER VOLUNTEER HIGH SCHOOL COACH SENTENCED TO 37 MONTHS FOR POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

BELLEVILLE, Ill. — A former volunteer coach at Belleville East High School was sentenced to more than three years in prison last week for possessing child pornography on his computer, following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Christopher A. Musso, 31, of Belleville, was sentenced Feb. 3 in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois to 37 months in prison and fined \$550 on 11 counts of possessing child pornography. He also faces up to three years supervised release after he completes his prison sentence. Musso pleaded guilty to the charges June 13, and was immediately ordered by the court to cease his volunteer coaching activities.

Musso had acted as a volunteer girl's softball coach and basketball coach at Belleville East High School, and also worked as a disc jockey at the high school dances. Musso is the latest individual to be caught in a global ICE child pornography investigation that has targeted an Internet billing company based in Minsk, Belarus, and its affiliated entities in the United States. To date, the probe has resulted in the arrest of more than 1,200 people worldwide.

In January 2004, the Belarus firm was charged with money laundering, providing credit card billing services for 50 child pornography websites worldwide, and operating child porn websites of its own. Three company officers were arrested in Europe and have been extradited to the United States. All three officers pleaded guilty in Newark, N.J., as have four officers of two affiliated companies in Florida and California.

Having dismantled the leadership of the enterprise, ICE agents in domestic ICE offices and 52 Attaché offices worldwide turned their focus to those who purchased child porn subscriptions from these sites in the United States and abroad. A lead arising from that investigation led to a search of Musso's home in November 2004. ICE agents found numerous pornographic images of children on his home computer.

This global Internet child pornography investigation is part of ICE's Operation Predator, a nationwide initiative to safeguard children against Internet child pornographers, criminal alien sex offenders, child sex tourists, and human traffickers. Since it was launched in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 6,900 individuals nationwide, including more than 340 in Illinois.

“Those who sexually exploit children should no longer expect distance or the anonymity of cyberspace to protect them,” said Elissa A. Brown, special agent-in-charge of ICE investigations in Chicago. “ICE is using all of its law enforcement authorities to combat this horrific behavior both here and abroad.”

Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert L. Garrison prosecuted this case.

ICE encourages the public to report suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. This hotline is staffed around the clock by investigators. Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*